

their communities to rebuild. I applaud the gaming industry for all they do.

□ 1015

THANKS TO QATAR

(Mr. ROHRABACHER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, we as a people should take note of those who immediately rushed forward to help. As a senior member of the International Relations Committee, I rise today to express my personal gratitude as well as that of my fellow Americans to the royal family and to the people of Qatar who once again demonstrated their generosity, friendship, and solidarity with the people of the United States at a time of our maximum suffering.

When it really counted, Qatar stepped forward with a generous gift of \$100 million to the American victims of Hurricane Katrina.

Qatar is a small country, yet it must rank near the top of America's list of friends and allies. With the leadership of a thoughtful and progressive royal family, Qatar is building democratic institutions including elections, freedom of press and religion, and a recognition of the rights of women.

Furthermore, after 9/11, our military was permitted to establish its headquarters in Qatar, which is vital to the safety of our troops and the success of America's operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Thank you, Qatar. You have proven to be friends when we needed you the most, and we will not forget it.

HURRICANE KATRINA EVACUEES IN THE DREAM CENTER

(Ms. SOLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, over the weekend I visited the Dream Center in Los Angeles, California, which is currently housing over 250 evacuees of Hurricane Katrina. The Dream Center has committed to feeding, housing and clothing these evacuees. The stories that I heard from them are gut wrenching. I met a woman who escaped with her two nephews and her 80-year-old mother, Sheila Bell.

I also visited with a father who was caring for his youngster who is 1 year old. But Mrs. Bell, unfortunately, was separated from her daughters. Her daughters are somewhere in Texas. She cannot find them. She wants to hear from them. And I want to also applaud the firemen and the first responders who risked their own lives to help those in need to leave the center.

Mrs. Bell recounted that the water level in her house came up to her neck. But there are many stories like hers. And one of the things that I have to

bring forward is the fact that FEMA made a promise to give these evacuees assistance.

Now, it is 2 weeks, the assistance is not there. Political hacks have pushed aside the professionals out of FEMA. Since this President took office, 4.1 million people have slipped into poverty. The poor and underserved of the Gulf are the hardest hit. They are the ones that need our help.

Let us move forward and help those that need our assistance now.

RED TAPE AND HURRICANE RELIEF

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, many of us were appalled at the red tape that hindered the Hurricane Katrina relief efforts. Hundreds of surgeons and paramedics were stranded in a state-of-the-art mobile hospital without patients to treat, prevented by Louisiana State officials from mobilizing their taxpayer-funded hospital closer to the disaster zone. State homeland security officials prevented the Red Cross from trucking in supplies in the immediate aftermath.

Police shut down a key bridge after the hurricane hit, preventing escape by victims of the storm. Churches in Louisiana asked by FEMA to take in victims of the hurricane have received no financial assistance from the agency, because FEMA cannot offer assistance to uncertified faith-based groups.

Survivors sleep on the floors of these churches while FEMA is storing unused cots in Louisiana warehouses. The worst thing that can come from all of these hearings, investigations, and commissions is more red tape of the sort that has slowed current relief efforts and probably cost many, many lives.

HURRICANE KATRINA TRAGEDY

(Mr. MORAN of Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, many people responded admirably and effectively in New Orleans and throughout the Gulf Coast. But the fact is that a natural disaster was turned into a human travesty because of incompetence, disorganization, and misplaced priorities.

And the answer does not lie in the firing of Michael Brown. It has been apparent to many who have watched what has happened within the Department of Homeland Security that FEMA has been unvalued within this administration, and as a result became a dumping ground for political hacks.

The fact is that 75 percent of FEMA's money has had to go to terrorism-related situations, such as paying overtime for TSA airport screeners, which

means that preparation for the possibility of flooding in New Orleans or an earthquake in San Francisco get very low priority.

In fact, we are not even preparing adequately now for an earthquake in San Francisco when two out of three of FEMA's highest priorities have already occurred with New York and New Orleans.

Mr. Speaker, another natural tragedy cannot be allowed to become another human travesty. We have to get into the guts of this organization, weed out the incompetents and fund it adequately and appropriately.

THANKS TO NASHVILLE ORGANIZATIONS

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, you know some in Washington are choosing to score political points on the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina. But out there in real America, real Americans are working to assist those who have been displaced.

I want to thank them for the great work that they are doing. Last week, I thanked our Memphis-area organizations who are helping our Gulf neighbors. Today I want to recognize the following Nashville-area organizations providing shelter. We have the Crieewood Baptist Church and Tulip Grove Baptist Church and their congregations; Clear View Baptist Church in Williamson County is providing shelter as well as food.

Grace Works Ministries is collecting clothing and hygiene kits, and the Interfaith Dental Clinic is providing acute dental emergency care for free. The Montgomery Bell Academy Service Club has loaded an 18-wheeler full of supplies, and they sent it south to Mississippi.

In Montgomery County, the Hilldale Church of Christ is doing the good work of taking in our neighbors.

I have been in Mississippi to help with the relief efforts, and I applaud the Nation's aid organizations and all of the work the local charities and the outstanding volunteers are giving to our neighbors in need.

IN SUPPORT OF THE CHILDREN'S SAFETY ACT

(Ms. HARRIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, sometimes numbers paint a dramatic picture. According to a survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Justice, one in five children 10 to 17 years old are recipients of unwanted sexual solicitations online. One of every seven victims of sexual assault is under the age of 6. One in five girls will be sexually exploited before they reach adulthood.

And one in 10 boys will become victims before they become men.

According to the National Center For Missing and Exploited Children, the whereabouts of 100,00 to 150,000 of some 500,000 sexual offenders currently registered in the United States are unknown.

What is known is that we are not powerless. I fully support the measures included in the Child Safety Act. The passage of this bill will do nothing to bring about the safe return of children like Carlie Brucia, a Sarasota Girl Scout who was brutally victimized and murdered by a sexual predator. However, it will save other families the most undeniable anguish of losing a child to the most unthinkable acts of violence.

This bill takes commonsense steps toward ensuring sex offenders are not free to prey on the most vulnerable members of our society. H.R. 3132 will require States to alert other States when sexual offenders seek other locations.

There are many, many things that keep parents awake at night. Passage of this bill should not be one of those.

THE ROAD TO DEMOCRACY IN AFGHANISTAN

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, in spite of great challenges, the Afghan people continue to make tremendous progress in creating a hopeful future for their families and their country.

On Sunday, Afghans will go to the polls to choose parliamentary candidates who will represent their views and reinforce their nation's status as a growing democracy. Preparations are being made to ensure that the upcoming election is fair and accessible to all citizens of Afghanistan.

Since many people in the country are illiterate, the ballots will list candidates names, photographs, personal symbols, and numbers to ensure that Afghans from all walks of life have the opportunity to participate in the election.

After witnessing the tremendous success of Iraq's elections, I am confident that the people of Afghanistan will also turn out overwhelmingly to cast their ballots.

They are committed to democracy and confident in their vision for their nation, which protects American families.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

HURRICANE KATRINA

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, Hurricane Katrina has devastated the

Gulf Coast unlike anything we have ever seen. The television cameras and newspaper pictures can only give us a glimpse of the devastation.

Recovery efforts will take time and resources, and many have opened their homes and their hearts and their wallets to those who have lost so much. And I am so very proud my home State of Georgia has stepped up to the plate to help those in need.

Everyone is doing their part. Many Georgia companies like Coca-Cola and UPS and Home Depot have given millions, million in aid to relief organizations.

But today I would like to recognize the hard work and dedication of some others, the students, the teachers and the schools of Georgia. Georgia schools are doing all they can, and we commend their efforts.

As of today, over 7,300 Hurricane Katrina-displaced students are enrolled in Georgia public and private schools. Georgia students are doing all they can as well. From bake sales to stuffing backpacks full of supplies, students are helping their new friends and peers by opening their hearts and homes.

Through times of crisis come times of opportunity, Georgians have seized that opportunity to help, and we are all grateful for their kindness and their generosity.

PROGRESS IN NEW ORLEANS

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, there is progress in New Orleans. The Port of New Orleans received its first shipment, and more people are back in the area for brief visits to assess the damage to their homes. In areas that were not flooded or the flood waters have begun to recede, citizens and crews began the clean-up process.

The Governor's office reported that 16 of the region's 25 wastewater treatment plants are now operational. And the New Orleans airport reopened for cargo planes just last week. Although service will be extremely limited, the airport reopened to commercial traffic this week.

In the wake of such a crippling disaster, we are already seeing promising indicators of recovery for the city of New Orleans. Our thoughts and prayers are still with the people of the Gulf region, and we in Congress will continue to work to ensure that New Orleans and the Gulf Coast continue to move towards a full recovery.

PRAISING ROME KARES

(Mr. GINGREY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to praise an organization in my district, Georgia 11, that has done a

phenomenal job of delivering food, clothing, housing supplies, and even employment to the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

Rome Kares is a model of coordinated community response. The group has aided more than 100 families who have temporarily relocated to Rome, Georgia, and Floyd County from Louisiana and Mississippi.

Rome Kares is a group that distributes an electronic newsletter detailing the items that relocated families need and acts as a clearinghouse for organizations and individuals looking for ways to help. Above all, Rome Kares helps evacuees get set up and settled in their new adopted community.

These efforts have been incredibly successful. Rome Kares has delivered gasoline, diapers, water, and bedding to hurricane-stricken areas, and furniture supplies and clothing to local evacuees.

Mr. Speaker, in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, we have seen the best of America; and Rome Kares is a model of this generosity and compassion. I ask that you join me in thanking Rome Kares.

IN SUPPORT OF JUDGE ROBERTS

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my strong support for President Bush's nominee for Chief Justice, Judge John Roberts, Jr., who started his confirmation hearings in the Senate this week.

Fortunately, Judge Roberts has been applauded through editorial boards throughout the Nation, including some papers in my State. In fact, the Greenville News said: "It is fitting that Rehnquist's brilliant law clerk, Judge Roberts, a man seemingly cut from the same judicial cloth, was nominated Monday by President Bush to become the Nation's 17th Chief Justice, and a man of integrity and fairness."

Mr. Speaker, Judge Roberts is the kind of judge this country needs. He will apply the law as written and decide each case on its merits regardless of his political views. Republicans and Democrats alike have acknowledged Judge Roberts' outstanding career. Democratic lawyers Lloyd Cutler and Seth Waxman and former Republican House Counsel C. Boyden Gray have cited his unquestioned integrity and fair-mindedness in praising him.

Judge Roberts is the right man for the job, and I strongly support his speedy confirmation.

□ 1030

EXTRAORDINARY COAST GUARD

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, there are so many success stories that are